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# **OUNDLE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

1953

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## **ANNUAL REPORT**

OF THE

### **MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH**

**B. ROWORTH TURNER,**  
B.A., M.B., B.Ch. Cantab.



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**OUNDLE:**  
**ALFRED KING AND SON, PRINTERS**

Oundle,  
June, 1954.

TO THE OUNDLE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to report on the health of the town during the year ending 31st December, 1953.

The town stands at a height varying from 60 to 200 feet above sea-level and overlooks the Nene river valley.

It comprises an area of 2,075 acres, exclusive of land occupied by water.

The Registrar General's estimate of the population is 3,051 and there are 765 inhabitable houses according to the Rate Books at the end of 1953.

The Rateable Value of the town is £19,829, and a Penny Rate produces £78.22.

The only notable industries are a brewery and a small boot factory, but the town provides market, educational, administrative and recreational facilities for the surrounding rural area.

In addition, there is an important Public School with over 600 scholars, a Grammar School, a County Modern School and an Elementary School within the town.

### Vital Statistics.

BIRTHS: 37.

Birth Rate=12.13 per 1000.

	Male	Female
Live Births	20	17
Legitimate	18	15
Illegitimate	2	2
Stillborn	0	1
Infantile Death Rate	0	0=0 per 1000

DEATHS.

Total Deaths=69.

	Male	Female
	33	36
Death Rate=22.61 per 1000.		
Acute Poliomyelitis	.....	1 death
Cancer	.....	7 deaths
Heart Diseases	.....	24 deaths
Diabetes	.....	3 deaths
Bronchitis	.....	2 deaths
Pneumonia	.....	3 deaths
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	.....	27 deaths
All other accidents	.....	2 deaths

### Infectious Diseases.

Whooping Cough	.....	.....	.....	7
Meningocochal Infection	.....	.....	.....	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	.....	.....	.....	1

### Diphtheria Immunisation.

Immunisation of school children has continued throughout the year, and the absence of any reported cases of diphtheria confirms the success of this work.

### General Provisions of Health Service.

Medical Officer of Health:

B. R. Turner, B.A., M.B., B.Ch.

Surveyor, Water Engineer and Sanitary Inspector:

J. Colvin, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

District Nurses:

Nurse Missen, S.R.N., and Nurse Cates, S.R.N.

Rating and Valuation Officer:

Mr. A. B. A. Wright.

Health Visitor:

Miss Miller.

### Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

The water supply of the town is derived from the river and provides a good but hard supply. Whilst some difficulty was experienced in maintaining the supply during the unusually dry autumn, no serious curtailment of the water was necessary. The water before distribution is partially softened to 12% (Clarke), filtered and chlorinated by the chloramine process.

The erection of additional houses and the more liberal supply of water to existing property is increasing the demand on the water supply system, so that the pumping station and water mains are not large enough to cope satisfactorily with these additional requirements.

Samples of mains water have been submitted regularly for bacteriological examination and have received satisfactory reports.

The sewers and sewage works have functioned satisfactorily throughout the year, but there is some pollution of the river due to the unsatisfactory effluent from the treatment works.

**Factory Act.****PART I OF THE ACT**

1.—Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

<i>Premises</i> (1)	<i>Number on Register</i> (3)	<i>Number of</i>		
		<i>Inspections</i> (4)	<i>Written notices</i> (5)	<i>Occupiers prosecuted</i> (6)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	10	23	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Nil</i>
(ii) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority .....	4	6	2	<i>Nil</i>
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises) .....	4	8	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Nil</i>
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	18	37	2	<i>Nil</i>

2.—Cases in which Defects were found:

*Four*

**PART VIII OF THE ACT**

**Outwork (Sections 110 and 111):**

*Nil*

The health of the town has been most satisfactory although on first sight the death rate per 1000 seems alarmingly high. This is due to the recent instruction of the Registrar General that all deaths in the Chronic Sick Hospital, no matter where the home of the person might be, were to be recorded against the Oundle Urban District. The death rate of these old and sick people in the Hospital is naturally high, but Oundle has rarely more than three persons residing therein, the remainder coming from Kettering, Wellingborough, Corby, Thrapston, etc.

Calculating the death rate on the deaths actually relating to Oundle, the result is a rate of 8.82 per 1000, which corrected by the comparability factor gives a rate of 8.29 per 1000, which compares favourably with the provisional national figure of 11.4 per 1000 for the rest of England and Wales.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

B. ROWORTH TURNER, B.A., M.B., B.Ch.

## **Oundle Urban District Council.**

### **ANNUAL REPORT OF WATERWORKS ENGINEER, SURVEYOR AND SANITARY INSPECTOR.**

Year ending 31st December, 1953.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

My annual report on the sanitary conditions of the district and a brief summary of the works carried out during the year ending 31st December, 1953, are submitted for your consideration.

#### **Highways.**

The year's working has shown completion of two major improvements, the making up of Ashton Road and the widening and re-kerbing of part of East Road.

Surface dressing of district roads to the extent of some 15,000 sq. yds. and many minor repairs and patching with tarmac were completed to your highways. The footpath along Ashton Road, East Road and the Ashton Meadows was surface dressed by your staff during the year.

A special effort was made during the autumn to clear out roadside grips which were found to be in need of much attention. In addition, the routine gritting, snow clearing, scavenging and painting of road signs has been satisfactorily dealt with.

#### **Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.**

The year has seen a survey of the conditions of your sewers and sewage disposal works by your Consulting Engineers. This resulted in additional work for your staff in recording flows of sewage and depths of manholes.

During the year the collapse of the 3 ft. brick storm overflow sewer at the rear of the Gas Works created additional work. The debris removed was estimated to be in the region of 30 tons and temporary repairs were completed to enable the sewer to function.

The Sewerage Works, except for minor repairs to the machinery, have continued to operate without serious trouble.

The mangold crop from the Sewerage Works did not attract any buyers in the autumn so the crop was clamped down for sale in the spring.

Tests of the effluent discharging from the Sewerage Works show that the present treatment is not producing a high enough standard of purification. No appreciable improvement seems possible without major re-construction of the works.

The main sewers were flushed regularly and the surface water gullies emptied periodically.



No serious flooding or breakdown of the Sewerage system, with the exception of the storm water drain at the rear of the Gas Works, has taken place during the current year.

### **Water Supply.**

A constant supply of water has been maintained throughout the year, and the bacteriological examinations of samples of mains water taken from various points in the town have given satisfactory results.

A number of minor breakdowns in the pumping machinery were experienced during the year and the necessary repair work was carried out. Generally, the machinery at the Waterworks is obsolete, badly worn and, by the nature of the driving methods, difficult to make completely safe to operate.

The slow sand filter beds are over-loaded and, by reason of the excessive head of water used to maintain an adequate supply to the high pressure pumps, no longer operate as biological filters. The satisfactory bacteriological results obtained from samples are due no doubt to the natural filtration the water receives during the process of reaching the well, and the addition of chlorine to the water before pumping in the mains.

Unfortunately, the chlorinator is not reliable and breakdowns have occurred regularly.

During the year, 40 tons of sand was placed in the filter beds and the reservoir was cleaned out. The routine skimming of filter beds, replacement and repair of hydrants, fixing of water meters, replacement of tap washers and repairs to underground stopcocks and services, has continued throughout the year.

In all, 21 new connections to the water mains have been made during the period under review.

A scheme and plans were prepared for the improvement of the Waterworks based on your previous Water Engineer's report, but Ministry permission to proceed on these lines was unfortunately not forthcoming.

Alternative suggestions for dealing with the problem were suggested by the Ministry and included that of calling in your Consultant Engineers and taking a bulk supply from the Oundle and Thrapston Rural District Council.

The end of the year with its serious shortage of rain raised difficulties in maintaining an adequate supply from your existing works, and an emergency scheme was arranged in case the supply should fail, but I am pleased to report that the need to operate this did not arise.

Water samples for bacteriological examination were taken from the five remaining wells in the town providing water for human consumption, and in every case were found to be

giving a polluted supply. Immediate action was taken to provide a mains supply to the affected people with the exception of one block of property on the outskirts of the town which is some distance from a water main.

During the year, 31 water samples were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory, Northampton, for bacteriological examination.

### **Bathing.**

A slow sand filter was constructed at the Bathing Pool in an attempt to purify the river water before use.

Unfortunately, the closing of the pool on other health grounds was necessary, and the filter was never fully put into operation.

### **Refuse Collection.**

The collection of refuse has been maintained successfully throughout the year, but at times arrears of work have accumulated because of additional duties placed on the vehicle in connection with highway and other work.

Tipping accommodation at Churchfield Lane has been difficult and a new site is necessary.

### **Rodent Control.**

This year has seen the inauguration of a grant-aided rodent control service providing free treatments to domestic householders.

Rodent control has been difficult in the older parts of the town due to the age of the buildings and the presence of stone sewers running down to the river.

During the year the following work was completed:—

- 3 treatments to Council properties.
- 29 treatments to domestic household properties.
- 8 treatments to business properties.

### **Salvage.**

The collecting, sorting and baling of waste paper has continued throughout the year.

Prices offered by the wholesalers have been low and baling costs exceed the return from the waste material. As this waste paper would still, however, have to be disposed of, the scheme is not so uneconomical as might appear on first sight.

### **Housing.**

Fourteen houses have been completed on the Tilley Hill Close Council House Estate during the year, and the construction of an additional ten is in preparation.

These additional houses will complete the Tilley Hill scheme and the purchase of additional land will be necessary before any further progress with housing will be possible.

Private house building has been steadily improving and five houses were completed during the period under review.

### Cemetery.

The Cemetery grounds have continued to be maintained at a high standard over the year, but considerable repairs were necessary to the Cemetery buildings to make them weather-proof. This work has been completed satisfactorily.

### Food Inspection.

The following foodstuffs were inspected and condemned:—

25 lbs.	cheese
13 tins	milk
2 tins	fish
1 tin	ovaltine
14 tins	luncheon meat
48 lbs.	pork sausages
2 tins	peas
2 tins	stewed meat
4 tins	prunes
1 tin	cream
1 tin	corned beef
3 tins	fruit.

### Visits and Inspections in connection with the Sanitary Conditions of the District.

Drainage and sewage disposal	.....	100
Moveable dwellings	.....	12
Refuse tip	.....	81
Water sampling	.....	31
Water supply	.....	24
Keeping of animals	.....	6
Bathing pool	.....	28
Housing complaints	.....	113
Food premises	.....	51
Food inspection	.....	20
Rodent infestations	.....	94

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560

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The year generally has seen some improvement carried out to the Council's undertakings in addition to the routine maintenance work. This additional work to some degree has been completed by your own staff with resultant economy in cost.

I am pleased to report that the addition of a building operative to your workmen's staff has now made your organisation capable of dealing with the majority of minor building and engineering works requiring attention.

J. COLVIN, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.